

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
CITY OF MILPITAS  
SISTER CITIES COMMISSION**

**Minutes:** Regular Meeting of Sister Cities Commission (SCC)  
**Date of Meeting:** Thursday, April 24, 2003  
**Place of Meeting:** Milpitas City Hall, 455 E. Calaveras Blvd., Committee Conference Room

**I. Roll** Chair Garcia called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners/Alternates Present: Arthur, Chahal, Downey, Garcia, Grilli, Iringan, Lind, Swiger, Tsao  
Commissioners Absent: none  
City Council Liaison Present: Bob Livengood  
MUSD Liaison Present: Mike Mendizabal

**II. Alternates** No alternates were seated.

**III. Pledge** Chair Garcia led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. Minutes** **MOTION** to approve the Minutes of March 27, 2003.  
M/S: Swiger/Grilli Ayes: Arthur, Chahal, Garcia, Grilli, Iringan, Swiger  
Abstain: Lind

**V. Agenda** **MOTION** to approve the April 24, 2003 agenda.  
Staff Correction: Proper spelling of Gisella Meng's name.  
M/S: Lind/Swiger Ayes: All

**VI. Announcements/Correspondence**

Staff Liaison Stobbe stated that a Request for Sister City application from Huizhou City, China, was included in the commission's April agenda packet and distributed two items: 1) 4/17/03 *Milpitas Post* article about Milpitas' sister city relationship with Dagupan City, Philippines, and; 2) Directory of Local Officials. Chair Garcia provided an overview of the 4/15/03 City Council meeting and noted its unanimous approval of SCC's recommendation; Swiger, Iringan, and Garcia attended with a reception following; Dagupan City representatives distributed t-shirts, which the Chair will distribute at the May SCC meeting. Staff offered a videotape of Council's review and discussion and stated KMLP, Channel 15 will also rerun the meeting.

**VII. Citizen's Forum**

There were no comments from the public.

**VIII. New Business**

## **1. APPLICATION FOR SISTER CITIES RELATIONSHIP: TIANJIN, CHINA**

Chair Garcia invited Tianjin City representative Gisella Meng to the conference table and opened the discussion by requesting that Meng provide an overview of the Request for Sister City form.

Meng: She has spoken with the president of a technological association who expressed his enthusiasm about participating with Milpitas Chamber of Commerce; there is interest to establish coordination with Tianjin's chamber of commerce, and; Tianjin is interested in establishing cultural exchanges with students.

Tsao: Is there a local Chinese chamber of commerce? Meng: This is in a development process, but has not yet been formed.

Garcia: What is the interest and support within Milpitas community? Is there an established group of citizens in Milpitas interested? Meng: Would like to research a core support group and present this to SCC.

Lind: Reviewed brochure and noted Tianjin's population of 9.6 million, possibly the third largest city in China. What does Milpitas have in common with Tianjin? Meng: Both have similar cultural and technological interests. Lind: It is not evident that a group within Milpitas is coming forth to support this application. What are the educational aspects? Meng: Considering rapid development of technological aspects, there are similar businesses seeking opportunities. Lind: This appears to be an opportunity for industry contact only.

Garcia: What are the aspects of an average city in China? Meng: There is no valid comparison. Sister city relationships create the platform to meet each other and determine common aspects and interests.

Tsao: Does Tianjin have other sister city relationships? Meng: The brochure notes Chicago, IL; there are at least four in the U.S. and more than 50 established relationships worldwide.

Arthur: Why did Tianjin choose Milpitas? Meng: Tianjin desires relationships with cities that show enthusiasm for and openness to formal sister city relationships, which Milpitas does show willingness and respect for such relationships. Mayor Esteves referred Meng to SCC when she first expressed this interest.

Garcia: What is citizen and business support within Milpitas? SCC will need to have demonstration of such support. Meng: Will research and provide this data.

Tsao: Asked that Meng please clarify this information. Garcia: Residents should be present at SCC meetings along with written support describing what their responsibilities toward the relationship (developing communications; coordinating events or trips; noting types of business connections, and what businesses would provide specific types of support).

Chahal: What schools and other social connections would be part of this relationship? Meng: Tianjin has many technological and collegiate schools, and connections exist between local and regional media such as the Chinese radio station on N. Milpitas Blvd.

Discussion followed regarding types of evident support, such as grassroots, residential involvement and people interested in developing and supporting an active cultural relationship.

Swiger: Tianjin's population is too large and he doesn't believe this is an appropriate match for Milpitas.

Livengood: Provided a suggestion: SCC may ask the representative to bring back requested information; however, if a majority of SCC doesn't believe this city to be a fit, say so now to provide direction. SCC may want to determine if this is an opinion shared by other members.

Grilli: Noted past discussions about other cities where a population scale is not comparable. He doesn't think Tianjin represents a moderate-sized city in China, as Milpitas does in the U.S. In addition, hearing a promotion of business interests isn't a primary focus of SCC's goals for relationships. Stated his agreement with Swiger.

Consensus discussion followed including validity in comparing population; balancing business interests with a cultural focus, and; concerns about a core support group of residents to fulfill the relationship and possible exchanges. Development of Milpitas' first sister city relationship was reviewed: business relationships were used to support cultural/student exchange aspects of the relationship that underwrote and assisted the community; focus should be to enrich the citizens' environment, not business interest. It is acceptable that businesses support the cultural aspects of a relationship with Milpitas; it is not acceptable to SCC to enter into a relationship to fulfill business goals.

Lind: If there is a core group of Milpitas citizens to support the relationship, then she is willing to hear further discussion.

Meng: Noted discussions with business representatives, students and different interests; cultural interests are in cooperation between the two cities; she would like to show where opportunity is to fit each other's needs.

Downey: Supports receiving more information with a demonstration of business and residential interests.

Garcia: Asked SCC for direction. Responses: SCC is willing to receive additional information. Goals for the next discussion would be a presentation supporting residential involvement of a cultural relationship. This should include a proposal of a type of cultural exchanges and a core group with a list of addresses of Milpitas residents willing to support a cultural relationship would be sufficient.

Chahal: Noted that in a worldwide population comparison, Milpitas is a village compared to other cities. SCC should consider common interests.

Consensus was to request that Ms. Meng determine the core group of Milpitas residents and local business to demonstrate support and propose the nature of a sister city relationship at May meeting.

## **2. POTENTIAL ONE-YEAR EXTENSION, MILPITAS/TSUKUBA MOU, JUNE 2000 – AUGUST 2003**

Vice Chair Arthur reviewed her conversation with a Tsukuba City representative. There is unofficial approval to extend the relationship one year. Official agreement is expected in writing in May. Discussion followed about scheduling the request for Council agenda and consensus was to target the June 3 Council agenda. Arthur stated that the new Tsukuba staff contact is Mr. Motohisa Hosota. Staff requested contact information for forwarding to all SCC members. Staff will place Tsukuba's letter and contact information into the May 22 agenda packet.

## **IX. Old Business**

**3. TSUKUBA-TO-MILPITAS CULTURAL EXCHANGE, 8/17 – 24/03**

Arthur reported that Tsukuba City has decided to postpone traveling to Milpitas this year, and expressed an interest to conduct the cultural exchange next year with an extension of the memorandum of understanding between Milpitas and Tsukuba.

## **XI. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**

### **X. City Council Report**

Council member Livengood praised SCC's work on the formal agreement with Dagupan City noting that the Council was impressed with local support. He stated he is looking forward to the developing relationship and future cultural exchanges.

### **XI. Future Agenda Items**

1. Application for Sister Cities Relationship: Huizhou, China (May)
2. Potential One-year Extension, Milpitas/Tsukuba MOU (May)
3. Application for Sister Cities Relationship: Tianjin, China (May)
4. Dagupan Relationship: SCC Point of Contact & Additional Information (May)
5. General calendar/procedures checklist for preparing cultural exchanges (TBA)
6. Discussion with Sister City Association representative (TBA)

## **XII. Adjournment**

No further business was discussed with the meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, May 22, 2003.

**MOTION** to adjourn the meeting of April 24, 2003.

M/S Lind/Grilli Ayes: All

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly Cuciz  
Recording Secretary

Leslie Stobbe  
Staff Liaison